

Role Conflict among Working Women – A Sociological Analysis

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Abstract:

This paper reflects on the role conflict among working women in Haryana, India. A working women have to perform dual roles. She has to work as a mother, wife, daughter-in-law at home and an efficient worker at workplace. Because of dual roles working women face role conflict. Role Conflict in the context of the present study is conceptualized as a situation in which a woman is expected to play two incompatible roles at the same time. A woman experience role conflict when she find herself pulled in various directions as she try to respond to many responsibilities at home and at workplace. This role conflict results into many problems for working women. The present paper highlights on the extent/level of role conflict and its consequences among working women.

I. Introduction

Women are the integral part of society. In today's scenario women are not confined to the four walls of the house. The status of the women have been changed and they are coming out of their homes. Women in today's world have started to work in every sector. Today women are contributing economically to their families. Traditional beliefs and values are changing due to modernization, urbanization and industrialization. Women make a major part of Indian labour force. According to 2011 census total number of female workers in India is 149.8 million and their work participation rate is 25.51 percent. But because of gender based division of labour woman has to perform household duties primarily. These multiple roles at home and at workplace results into role conflict. Woman's self image is built chiefly around their family roles, so she has to take a middle path, performing her household duties and workplace commitment. There are contradictory role expectations from working woman while she is at home and at workplace. These contradictory role expectations results into role conflict. Due to role conflict working women face many problems. As women increasingly gain occupational mobility, they are not only exposed to the same physical hazards of work environment as men but also exposed to the pressures created by multiple role demands and conflicting expectations. By fulfilling their economic needs, employment has no doubt made women independent with an identifiable social status but it has also made them to juggle into two main domains of life- work and family. The present study highlights the extent of role conflict among married women engaged in government jobs in Haryana, India. Also the study identifies the consequences of role conflict and its suggestive measures.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Bhandari,2004,94-104) in her study reveals that because of dual responsibility working women have to suffer physically and mentally. (Jayasudha&Ramegowda, 2016, 194-199) in their study investigated the degree of role conflict among women lawyers. They face high degree of role conflict due to which they suffer physically. Empirical literature on work and family conflict indicates that higher levels of role conflict have detrimental and dysfunctional

implications for both individuals and the work organizations. In case of individual it has ramifications like lower job satisfaction, quality of marital life, stress, depression and resultant health and psychological disorders (Allen, Hurst, Bruck and Sutton, 2000; Boles, Johnston and Hair, 1997; Frone, Yardley and Markel, 1997; Higgins, Duxbury and Irving, 1992; Kinunnen and Mauno, 2004; Kossek and Ozeki, 1998; Thomas and Ganster, 1995). Sen (1990) revealed that in spite of high female education and employment, women are compelled to do their traditional duties of cooking and shouldering of responsibility of childcare and other household chores.

III. Conceptual Framework

1. Role

A role is a set of connected behaviours, rights, obligations, beliefs and norms as conceptualized by people in a social situation. According to Ralph Linton role is the dynamic aspect of status. Sociologists use the term "role" (as do others outside of the field) to describe a set of expected behaviors and obligations a person has based on his or her position in life and relative to others.

2. Role Conflict

Role conflict is defined as the struggle in different roles. Conflicts in roles arise basically due to several reasons but in general, it is the desire to attain success in life and the challenges which acts as a pressure on one's dream and demand which conflict with each other. Personality and inter-personal relations acts as a major factor in determining the effects of role conflict. An example of role conflict would be a husband and father who is also Chief of Police. If a tornado strikes the small town he is living in, the man has to decide if he should go home and be with his family and fulfill the role of being a good husband and father or remain and fulfill the duties of a good Chief of Police because the whole town needs his expertise.

IV. Importance of the Study

The Present study focuses on the role conflict among working women. Working women face more role conflict while performing her role than non working women. The issue of women's employment is directly linked with the role of women in family and disproportionately high burden of domestic responsibility which acts as a barrier to entry in to the working field. The dual roles of working women come into contradictions, due to such kind of reasons the role conflict emerges. As a result of this, the stress factor develops and many times she suffers from guilty conscience and finds herself torn between homes, working place and society. This ultimately leads to many problems. A detailed analysis of various aspects relating to conflict and problems emerging out of dual role performance come under the scope of the present study.

V. Objectives

The present study seeks to address itself to the following objectives :

1. To ascertain the extent of role conflict among working women,
2. To identify the consequences of role conflict and its suggestive measures.

VI.METHODOLOGY

The data were gathered through interview schedule from 200 married women engaged in various government jobs in Haryana . Using the simple purposive sampling (a type of non probability sampling) respondents were selected . The respondents for the purpose were selected from Kurukshetra district of Haryana and working in various govt. jobs such as teaching , banking , police , and in other govt. departments .

VII.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study role conflict of the respondents is classified as low, moderate , and high based on the responses of the respondents to the questions specifically framed for the purpose. The respondents who feel at ease while discharging their responsibilities both at home and on the job are considered as experiencing low role conflict. The respondents who feel sometimes at ease but not all the time while discharging responsibilities both at home and job are considered those with moderate role conflict and the respondents who never feel at ease while discharging responsibilities both at home and on job are considered to be women with high role conflict.

Table-1
Extent of Role Conflict

SI No	Extent of Role Conflict	Frequency	Percentage
1	High Degree of Role Conflict	140	70
2	Moderate Degree of Role Conflict	47	23.5
3	Low Degree of Role Conflict	13	6.5
Total		200	100

A majority of the respondents (70 percent) were of the opinion that they never felt at ease in meeting the obligations both at work and family. Therefore, such respondents were categorized as those with high degree of role conflict . 47 (23.5 percent) of the respondents were identified with the moderate degree of role conflict and a very small proportion (6.5 percent) of respondents are found to be relatively free from such role conflict. It is evident from the table that the role conflict is widespread and therefore it is very much necessary to probe into the causal factors associated with role conflict and to suggest suitable remedial measures to minimize the problem.

Consequences of Role Conflict –

The study reveals that a majority of respondents face high degree of role conflict .Role conflict results into many problems such as physical disorder , mental problem , stress , family problem , reduced job performance , marital conflict, weakened bonds , loss of self esteem, anxiety and guilt etc. The study reveals that majority of the respondents (91.5 percent) expressed that they are suffering from the stress. However, very small proportion (8.5percent) of the respondents opined that they are free from stress. Proportion of respondents in the high degree of role conflict is found among the respondents who are

suffering from the stress. Similarly the proportion of respondents in the low degree of role conflict is highest among the respondents who are not suffering from the stress. The data reveals that 128 of the respondents (64 percent) had a feeling of guilt for not giving sufficient time to their childrens . A majority of respondents , 68 percent , were of the opinion that there was a reduce in their job performance because of role conflict . Among 200 respondents 137 respondents were suffering from physical disorder due to heavy workload at home and at workplace . Hence the study reveals that role conflict results into many problems for working women .

Measures to reduce the fatal effects of role conflict faced by working Women –

1. **Support from her parents**-A plants which strong roots is capable of striving through the tough weather. Parents should pay a lot more attention in their daughter's upbringing. They should guide her through the ups and downs which she would meet in her life. As parents they must trust her and let her take her own decisions where ever required lot of confidence and feeling of selflessness must be instilled in her so that she might not take the changes in her life as conflicts.
2. **Support from her in laws and husband**-They must understand that the society is made from the people living in it. If girls are imbued with good educational values then this is futile for their family as well. They must never ask for dowry and even support her in house hold chores Her proficiencies in both personal and professional life must be appreciated .Such measures will too an extent reduce the level of role conflict .
3. **Social interaction with other females of her age group**-One must have heard that woman is worst enemies and best friends. Social interaction, guidance from other mature women etc help in reducing the major conflicts. Through the experiences of other much settled women, one can take help in resolving many issues.
4. **Self Help**- There is no help better than self help .If you are in problem or any conflicting situation one mustnot leave to destiny or submit it to time instead fight for it .Arrogance or violence has never fetch anything,it is the wit and practical attitude which saves us from hardships. It is very important to have good communication skill and decent level of perseverance. Conflicts can be resolved without breaking or harming relations.
5. **Better Implementation of laws** - The Government of India has taken several steps like Maternity benefit act 1961 , Companies act 2013 , factories act 1948, Minimum Wages Act 1950, Equal Remuneration Act 1976, Sexual Harassment Act at Work Place, 2013 to name a few . There is a need to implement these acts in a better way to support working women .

VIII.CONCLUSION

Women face a dual role all over the world. This dual role leads to work family conflicts. There are several expectations from her both in the family as well as in her profession. The two expectations demand two different women in a single woman. For pursuing her roles successfully, she has to work with a strict routine having greater physical and mental ability to deal with critical situations in time. In conflicts between job and family, the role of family dominates over the role of job. The study reveals that 70 percent of respondents face high degree of role conflict. Because of role conflict working women experience many problems at household level and at workplace . 137 of the respondents were suffering from physical disorder, 183 of the respondents were suffering from stress and 136 respondents were in the

opinion that their job performance had negative effect of role conflict . Some suggestive measures as support from parents , support from husband , self help , social interaction with other female etc. are also identified in the study . Government should take appropriate steps to support working women by proper implementation of laws and making new policies for the betterment of working women .

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